HEART VALVE HOLDER AND METHOD FOR RESISTING SUTURE LOOPING

Abstract of the Disclosure

An improved holder and method for implanting a tissue-type prosthetic mitral heart valve that prevents suture looping and may also constrict the commissure posts of the valve. An upstanding or shaft member axially positioned on the holder causes the lengths of attachment sutures to extend axially beyond the commissure post tips to create a tent and prevent looping of any of an array of pre-implanted sutures around the tips during deployment of the valve. The shaft member may be axially movable such that it can be initially retracted and then actuated just prior to valve deployment. The shaft member may have notches on its distal tip for capturing the attachment sutures, which are crossed over along the valve axis to ensure engagement by the notches. The attachment sutures may be strands or filaments, or may be wider bands of flexible biocompatible material. If bands are used, they desirably cover the commissure post tips to further help prevent suture looping thereover. The flexible lengths of material extend directly between commissures of the valve, or may extending radially inward from each commissure to a central upstanding member.